

HOW TO HELP A CHRISTIAN EXECUTIVE
INTEGRATE HIS THEOLOGY INTO HIS WORK

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis project will develop a program to help Christian executives integrate their faith into their work. Many Christians struggle with how to serve the Lord and use the resources of the Christian faith in their employment. They feel that what they do at their work is not nearly as important in God's eyes as what is done on Sunday mornings at church. This project consists of eight modules that will be used to help Christian executives have a comprehensive theology of work and leadership. The project design is for a one hour appointment for eight weeks and this material will be communicated regarding a theology of work, ethics, and leadership through personal coaching and counseling and reading of books, articles, and scripture passages and how these shape the integration of faith into the workplace.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

How do you integrate your faith into the workplace? This question leads to many other questions. What does this really mean to integrate your faith into your job? How does one integrate their faith into what they do between Monday and Friday? Is it possible to integrate one's faith into your work life in this pluralistic post modern age? What does integrating faith into the workplace really mean?

These are questions that millions of Christian workers are asking. It has been said that in the workplace, we have gone through the gender-friendly stage, in which women have found acceptance in the workplace (Miller 2005). We have also gone through the race-friendly stage, in which individuals from all races have found acceptance and flourished in the workplace.

Now the stage is set for the faith-friendly workplace. This is the new horizon and challenge for the future. All too often Christians find themselves involved with companies where the expression of any kind of faith or religious perspective is frowned upon, where no one is allowed to pray publicly, and where religious symbols such as a cross, the Star of David or the Bible are not allowed to be displayed. I am familiar with these attitudes. On the other side of the ledger, in many churches there is a great disconnect between what happens in a Christian's life on Sunday morning and what happens on Monday morning. Too often, many ministers do not attempt in any way to teach Christians how their forty to sixty hour per week work lives have any relevance to their church life. Sometimes the profit made from work is thought to be almost evil.

Sometimes the church is guilty of making the people in the pew feel like the only significant thing they do for God is what happens on Sunday morning during Sunday school and worship or at the Wednesday service. The people in the pew are made to feel that non church activity is somewhat “lesser” in value in God’s eyes.

This project will attempt to develop a program to help Christian executives integrate their faith into their work. I want to do this because I work with a number of Christian executives who struggle with how to serve the Lord and use the resources of the Christian faith in their employment. Here in Columbus, Georgia, in my cultural context in the Deep South, many Christians feel that what they do at their work is not nearly as important in God’s eyes as what is done on Sunday mornings at church. Things such as assisting at worship as an usher or tithe collector or helping the minister with the distribution of communion elements are considered “higher tasks” in the service of the Lord. While these are important acts of service for the Lord, they are often held up by well meaning believers as the true work of the Lord. It is implied that nothing done during the work week can come close to being so sanctified.

I have counseled Christian executives who feel guilty that they are only able to give the Lord their “tired hours,” when they are involved in Sunday morning or Wednesday evening church ministry. I have seen Christian executives overwhelmed by this guilt who have eventually resigned from their jobs to pursue what they thought was “real ministry,” the ministry of church work, even when they have had a very successful influence as a Christian in their workplace.

I have also seen Christian executives who feel as though their only ministry throughout the work week is how effective they have been in sharing their faith. One executive who will be involved with me in this project asked if he should record his attempts at evangelism with individuals who work in his sphere of influence, as if that were the only point of the integration of faith into the workplace.

It is my plan to develop a program for Christian executives that will help him to have a comprehensive theology of work and leadership. I plan to work this out by developing a contract with two Christian hospital executives who work with me in the Columbus Regional Healthcare System where I serve as the Director of Pastoral Care. One of the executives is the senior executive officer for one of our three hospitals, Hughston Hospital, which is one of the premiere orthopedic hospitals in the nation. His name is Butch Wheeler. He is from a blue collar southern Baptist background. Butch also is proud of his service as an officer in the U.S. Army. He played college basketball and is very competitive. Butch has served as the Chairman of Deacons for his southern Baptist church and has taught Sunday school for many years.

The second individual is Roland Thacker. Roland serves as the Chief Financial Officer for Columbus Regional Healthcare System. He is a senior vice president in the company. Roland is responsible for making payroll every two weeks for 3,500 employees and for managing the entire financial operation for three hospitals, a cancer center, a retirement center as well as two nursing facilities, and several physician practices.

I will meet with these two executives for a one hour appointment individually for eight weeks. I will communicate to each of them the material I have learned in this program regarding a theology of work, ethics, and leadership. There will also be personal

coaching and counseling regarding readings of books, articles, and scripture passages and how these apply to the integration of faith into the workplace.

The goal of this project will be to help the Christian executives to become a redemptive leaders in his organization so that he will learn to view every aspect of his work and life as an executive as God's work.

The first session that I will conduct with the executives is the session on having a true biblical theology of work. I plan to have them read the book *Doing God's Business* by Paul Stevens. We will study relevant scripture passages which point out that our earthly work has heavenly value, and that work is a form of worshipping the Lord. A General who commanded the 10th Mountain Division told me on a visit to West Point that his command (10th Mountain) would be soon deploying to Afghanistan "to do God's work." I appreciated that he senses God's calling to his job as Commanding General of one of American's great combat divisions.

The second session will be on our calling by the Lord to our jobs. I believe that Scripture is clear that a sense of calling from the Lord is vital to having a proper theology of work. The sense of calling makes a real difference in the motivation one brings to the workplace.

The third session will be on the need to be a redemptive leader. This will involve using a tool developed by Will Messenger titled *A Redemption Model for Faith and Daily Life* (2001). I will use this to help teach the executives how better to think about issues from a Christian perspective that might arise in their sphere of influence. I will also discuss the importance of servant leadership and the alignment of their own goals with that of the organization.

The fourth session will be on the importance of character development to Christian leadership and influence within an organization. In this session, I will again emphasize scripture but also discuss ego needs and what I call “fraud anxiety,” that is, the fear that someone is going to discover that you are totally incompetent to do your job.

The fifth session will be how to live out the Christian faith in a pluralistic setting. The workplace is not like the hallways of a church on Sunday morning. Many different beliefs often converge at work. We will discuss the tension between being a Christian executive and working in a secular workplace. We will look at the challenges, opportunities, and navigation skills for effective service to Christ.

The sixth session will be a discussion of the place of prayer and planning for a Christian executive. Christians might be led to believe that faith does not require prayer and planning. I hope to show that the Bible mandates prayer and planning as disciplines and as tools God uses to help us accomplish the tasks that He has called us to.

The seventh session will cover the need for ethics in the life of the Christian and how that applies to the workplace. One commentator has noted that theology and ethics cannot be separated without fatal damage to both (Sproul 2009, 45). I want the executives to understand that ethics is more than making sure we do not do something wrong. Ethics is proactive and the absence of wrongdoing is merely a beginning point. I want the executives to see the pursuit of ethics as a broad view that has positive effects on work life, product quality, and relationships with customers as well as with the community as a whole.

The eighth session will focus on the importance of a robust devotional life for the Christian executive who is attempting to integrate theology into work. Time spent with

Christ in reading, prayer, and meditating is one of the major tools the Holy Spirit uses to cause growth and influence and power in the life of a Christian. This is foundational for any Christian seeking to walk with God and be influential for the things of Christ.

Through these eight one-on-one sessions, these two executives will learn how they can apply the resources of the Christian faith into their workplaces. They are also designed so that the executives will have a much broader and deeper understanding of how their work has ramifications, not only for this world, but for the glorious world to come.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT

This chapter focuses on some of the relevant Bible passages helpful in discussion with the two executives who were part of this project in learning how to integrate their theology into their work. The biblical passages are written out and comments are made regarding how the particular passage relates to the integration of theology into the workplace. The passages are written in the order that this author used them throughout the eight week project and divided according to the eight subject headings: Theology of Work, Calling, Character, Leadership, Prayer and Planning, Ethics, Devotional life and the Redemption Model for Faith and Daily Life.

Theology of Work

A proper biblical theology of work begins in the book of Genesis, in the creation accounts where God first created work for man. It is important to understand that work was given before the Fall of humankind.

Genesis 1:28

The passage indicates that it is in the divine nature of work that vocation is imbued with great dignity.

“And God blessed them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and every living thing that moves on the earth.”

This passage is known widely as the “cultural mandate”. This is God’s charge to all humankind to be involved in the world by being fruitful, that is adding value to the world by working and also by multiplying, i.e. by having children that will fill the earth. This charge was given before sin entered the world. Adam and Eve were created in this perfect environment of the Garden of Eden. They had a perfect, intimate relationship with God. They had all that they needed, yet God told them to be fruitful, to add value to what they already had.

R.C. Sproul (2009) points out that Genesis 1 is also the first place in the Bible where the remarkable truth is given, that the Creator has made human beings to share in His reign. The Old Testament says that the Lord God created the heavens to declare His glory (Ps 19:1), but also that humankind was made to do the same through ruling over the earth. Men and women alike are made in the image of God (vv. 26-27); thus, they are special and unique reminders of the creation of its ultimate Sovereign. The ancient Israelites who first read Genesis 1 were familiar with the statues or images that conquering kings set up throughout their empires to manifest visibly the extent of their reign. In revealing that men and women are the image of God, the Lord is saying that they are made for a similar purpose – to increase and spread across the globe to reflect God and His glory (v. 28).

Verse 28 explains that besides filling the earth, men and women are to subdue and exercise dominion over the world; not trashing or exploiting the planet, but cultivating its gardens, increasing its produce, and making it show forth the Lord’s glory more clearly. As the image of God, men and women are in a sense a “copy” of God, and in exercising righteous rule, they imitate their righteous ruler and contribute to the revelation of the

King and His kingdom. They are subjects of this magnificent King, but not mere subjects; rather dignified vice-regents made to authoritatively bring His righteousness to bear on all areas of life.

The concept of subduing the earth applies to anything over which men and women exercise wise stewardship. Every time a mother teaches a child a Bible verse, an accountant refuses to “cook” the company’s books, a flowering plant is pruned to increase its blooms and beauty, and so on, men and women are exercising the righteous dominion for which they were created (Sproul, 2010, 18). They have things to accomplish: to reign in the earth by subduing it and using it to produce food, and to reign in the animal kingdom for their benefit. Adam and Eve are not the owners of this garden. The Lord owns it and they are placed in the garden as stewards. This is evident by the Lord placing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17) and commanding them not to eat of it. They could eat of anything else but not of that tree. This introduces the idea of stewardship and work. This mandate is still true for people today. God wants them to be fruitful, not, as Tim Keller says “to be a park ranger,” (Sermon Note 2009) just watching over the earth. They are not called to pave over it, but to use it. A bank guard simply watches the money to make sure it doesn’t disappear. God is calling men and women to do far more in their stewardship than just guard the earth’s treasure. He wants them to be fruitful and multiply it and help it to grow. In other words, they are to add value to it. They are called to make it better than it was when they were born into it. This is an awesome privilege and adds a whole new dimension to work.

Genesis 2:15 says, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it”. This verse builds upon Genesis 1:28, the cultural mandate,

by clarifying that man is to work the garden and keep it. This involves doing something productive, and creating value out of the work. It is interesting to note in the creation accounts that there is no place where man is to go worship. There is no temple or church, there is no offering to be given, not is there mentioned the need for prayer. It is clear that the first couple had a beautifully intimate and transparent relationship with the Lord. It is also interesting to note that the English word “work” is translated from the original Hebrew Biblical word *avodah*. The Hebrew word *avodah* in the Old Testament “unites the ideas of work, labor, craftsmanship, and production with the ideas of worship, service, and ministry (Miller 2003, 1). Dr. David Miller of the Princeton University Institute of Faith and Work states that throughout the Old Testament, work (*avodah*) is used as worship. Genesis 2:15 shows that worshipping the Lord involves doing good work that is fruitful and that helps others to flourish and grow. People worship God when their work adds value to what is already there.

Even after the Fall of man, this cultural mandate for work is renewed by the Lord in Genesis 9:7 when he tells Noah to “be fruitful and multiply, populate the earth and multiply in it.” The Hebrew word *avodah* shows that work before the Fall and after the Fall is a way of serving and worshipping the Lord. Following are several uses of the *avodah* in the Old Testament. The Hebrew lexicon (The Brown-Driver & Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon 1976, 713), explains that *avodah* is to be translated “work, serve, worship (obey) God; worshipper.”

- Genesis 29 – Jacob works for Laban to win his wives Leah and Rachel.

- Exodus 34:21 – Moses renews the covenant with God says, “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even in plowing time and in harvest time you shall rest.”
- 1 Chronicles 28:21 – King David says to his son, Solomon, “The divisions of the priests and Levites are ready for all the work on the temple of God, and every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. The officials and all the people will obey your every command.”
- Psalm 104:23 – In a psalm about God as creator and provider: “Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening.
- Exodus 3:12 – “And God said, ‘I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.’”
- Exodus 8:1 – “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go to Pharaoh and say to him, “This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me.’”
- Numbers 8:11 – The Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron about how the Levites, the priestly class, will do the service of the Lord.
- Deuteronomy 10:12 – Moses tells his people what the essence of the law is: “So now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? Only to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all of your heart and with all of your soul...”
- Joshua 24:15 – Joshua asks all the tribes to renew the covenant: “Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve,

whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

These early verses in Genesis are important to understand in developing a proper biblical theology of work because they show that work was a blessing, given by God as a way of acknowledging Him as owner and Lord of all. The work itself is not to be worshipped but it is a means of serving, honoring, and worshipping the Lord to help people flourish. Men and women are to be stewards of all that God has given us.

Genesis 3

This passage is important because now sin has entered the world and this has real implications for work. There is now a problem of trust and transparency between God and man. Adam and Eve try to hide from God and they begin to cover themselves indicating a lack of transparency with each other and the Lord due to sin in the world. Fear (3:10) has also entered the world along with blaming and accusations (3:12). God gives a curse on the man which has far reaching implications for work. This curse means that work will no longer be easy as it was.

Genesis 3:17-19 says,

Cursed is the ground because of you: in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Work will now have many challenges: Crops will be affected by drought, flooding and freezing. Things will not always go so smoothly in work as they did in the Garden of Eden. Problems will occur both with what is produced as well as with the

people involved producing it. There is a silver lining in this for humankind: Although people will have problems in work in the future, these problems will in turn encourage people to seek the Lord. Prayer and devotion and seeking the Lord will be the effects of the Fall as man realizes that he can only do so much to affect the outcome of a field of crops. People can plant the crop, weed it, fertilize it, and watch over it but only God can bring the proper amounts of sunshine and water. Proverbs 21:31 says, The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord. [TLB]

This curse affects all of work, helping man to understand that he is a steward, not the deity. He must be reminded of this due to the corrosive effects of the Fall.

The Fall also has implications for personal relationships at work. The elements of fear, intimidation, greed, and mistrust are all symptoms of the Fall and must be understood as part of a proper biblical theology of work. If Christians are to strive to make their work part of God's redemptive plan, then they must have a proper understanding of the effects of the Fall on their work and their relationships at work.

Ephesians 6:5-8

Ephesians 6:5-8 says,

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is slave or free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that here is no partiality with Him.

The remarkable thing about this passage as it relates to work is that it is addressed to slaves. Paul points out that even the most menial work is worthwhile in God's eyes. It

is true that slavery in the ancient world was different from what most people in the twenty-first century think of slavery. "Slavery seems to have been universal in the ancient world. A high percentage of the population were slaves. It has been computed that in the Roman Empire there were 60,000,000 slaves. They constituted the work force, and included not only domestic servants and manual laborers but educated people as well, like doctors, teachers, and administrators. Slaves could be inherited or purchased, or acquired in settlement of bad debt, and prisoners of war commonly became slaves. Nobody queried or challenged the arrangement. The institution of slavery was a fact of Mediterranean economic life so completely accepted as a part of the labor structure of the time that one cannot correctly speak of the slave problem" in antiquity" (Stott 1979, 250). The typical American view is a pre-Civil War of slavery. It was known that when a nation was captured, all of its inhabitants became slaves. This passage teaches Christians that their real supervisor is the Lord. Most people have earthly accountability in their jobs and are to show great respect to their earthly supervisors, but they must always remember that their final accountability is to Christ. The passage also says that Christians work for the Lord at all times and so should not just do quality work when it is being inspected by supervisors. The Bible calls this eye service and Christians are not to be found guilty of this.

Dr. Howard Hendricks of Dallas Theological Seminary shared in class about an event that occurred on an American Airlines flight. The flight had been delayed and was idled on the tarmac for several hours. The people on board were becoming agitated with the lengthy delay. One man made a public spectacle of himself by berating a stewardess. Dr. Hendricks spoke of his admiration as to how well this stewardess handled this

situation. He stopped the stewardess and commended her and said he wanted to send a letter to the president of American Airlines to publicly commend her. The stewardess responded, “Sir, thank you very much but you must know that I really don’t work for American Airlines. I really answer to the Lord Jesus Christ; I just receive my paycheck from American Airlines.” Dr. Hendricks was quite impressed that here was someone who really knew how to integrate her theology with her work. This stewardess truly exemplified Ephesians 6:5-8.

Colossians 3:22-24

Colossians 3:22-24 says,

Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye service, as people pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a companion verse to the Ephesians 6:5-8 passage. Paul once again sets forth that there is no distinction in the New Testament between the sacred and the secular. Christ expects Christians to live all of their lives under His lordship.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 says,

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw – each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the

foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved but only as through fire.

This passage addresses the eternal value of work. It looks to the coming Day of Judgment when the Lord will test all things. The testing will come through fire. This author had assumed that all things would be burned up in the Day of Judgment except the souls of men. Upon further study of this verse it appears that fire will be used to test work, but that work that has been built on the foundation of Christ as part of his redemptive plan might survive. Martin Luther, the great reformer, was asked what he would do if he knew that Christ was coming back tomorrow. Luther's answer was that he would plant a tree, because he understood the Lord was going to redeem creation as well (Sermon Notes, B. Douglas, 2009). This passage indicates that some work will survive the test of fire and that there is eternal value to our earthly work.

Calling

1 Corinthians 7:17, 20

1 Corinthians 7:17,20 says, "Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him...Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called."

This verse shows that God has called people to different stations in life. It does not prohibit people from seeking upward mobility or seeking to better themselves, but it encourages them not to just seek change (slavery to freedom) for its sake alone. "He treats even slavery as comparatively unimportant, compared to this high calling, our actual situation in life is unimportant...We are called to be and to live as Christians; work is only one part of this" (Marshall 2004, 212).

Christians are first called to work out their faith wherever the Lord may have them. William Tyndale declared, “To wash dishes and to preach is all one, as touching the deeds to please God” (Marshall 2004, 209). If they are called, then that means there is a caller. This again has implications for a proper understanding of the stewardship of gifts that God has given. Too often Christians talk about calling only in regards to professional Christian ministry as a pastor or missionary or seminary student. The Bible makes it clear that their first calling is to live out their faith wherever they may find themselves. The Bible shows, however, that there are secondary callings that fall outside of the bounds of professional ministry.

Exodus 35:30-35

This passage shows that God called Bezalel and:

...filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver – by any sort of workman or skilled designer.

These and following verses show that God has given building skills and talents to different people to be used for His glory. These men were artisans and builders. This passage should encourage all believers that God has given them something to offer as work and worship to the glory of the Lord.

Exodus 36:1-2

Exodus 36:1-2 says, “Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the LORD has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary should work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded.”

Again, this reaffirms the calling and special gifts that are non-professional ministry gifts.

Genesis 10:8, 9

Genesis 10:8-9 says, “Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.”

This verse shows that Nimrod was an excellent hunter and that he practiced his hunting as a calling and way to serve and honor the Lord.

Psalms 65:9-13

In this passage the things of the earth, rivers of water, grain, ridges of mountains, rain showers, pastures, hills and meadows, and flocks of animals “shout and sing together for joy.” They praise the Lord by their being, not because they say anything verbally -- obviously they cannot -- but they point to the glory of the Lord just the way people can when they do their work well to His honor and glory.

Psalm 104:23-24

This passage reads, “Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening. O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.”

Psalm 104 demonstrates that various parts of creation – grass, plants, wine, birds, lions, and even man by his daily functions of life – give praise to the Lord. This passage in particular points out the effect of man’s work – his labors – that God made work and its fruits all for His own glory. Whatever God has called Christians to do can be used for His glory and honor.

Isaiah 2:12-18

This passage serves as a warning to man that he is not to become prideful and make work or the product of work into an idol. The prophet warns, “...the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord shall be exalted in that day. And the idols shall utterly pass away” (vv. 17-18).

Matthew 6:25-30

Matthew 6:25-30 says,

Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat and what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

This passage reiterates to the disciples that all they have is from the Lord, and that if they are His, He is going to take care of them. It reveals some of the symptoms of the Fall -- the fear and anxiety, the temptation of pride in God-given gifts and skills -- and points out that God's gifts are freely given. Christians are not saved because they are great and wonderful people. Marshall writes, "...the Scriptures couple their rejection of salvation by works with a denunciation of overweening pride in work" (Marshall, 2004, p. 212). Salvation is a free gift of God. Work cannot earn salvation or special favor from God. Work is not to be used as a tool to gain personal power and influence, but it is a wonderful gift of God to that can in turn be given back to Him to glorify Him and point to Him.

Ecclesiastes 2:24, 26

Ecclesiastes 2:24, 26 says, "There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat and drink and find enjoyment? For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy.... "

This reiterates that work and the pleasures and benefits of it are gifts from God and therefore people should not try to find fulfillment in their work unless the Lord allows it. "The writer gives practical advice in the light of the conclusion that meaning may not be found in either wisdom or hard work, two areas highly prized by the traditional wisdom teachers of Israel. The lifestyle he advocates is the pursuit of the basic necessities of life: food, drink, and enjoyment in work. One wonders how Qohlet ever expected anyone to enjoy their work after reading the previous section, but perhaps

that was not his real intention. Certainly, he understands, as we can see from the second half of the verse, that no one is able to enjoy even these simple pleasures unless God allows it” (Longman III 1998, 107).

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13, 22

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13, 22 says,

I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil – this is God’s gift to man...So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

This passage again shows that earthly gifts are from God; the mere pleasures of this life are gifts from Him and should cause and compel the desire to worship Him, honor Him and know Him, and to look forward to the day when He calls his followers home to be with Him.

Jeremiah 1:5

Jeremiah 1:5 says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you: I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

This is God’s specific call to Jeremiah to be a prophet. It also shows God’s sovereignty in that He knew Jeremiah before he was formed in his mother’s womb, and that God had called him to his tasks before his life even had begun. This scripture demonstrates that God is sovereign over all things, that He has plans for each and every individual to work out through their life time.

Psalm 139:13-16

This passage confirms view of God's sovereignty over our lives when it says:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

The Lord knows His people intimately and has created each one of them uniquely to honor and glorify Him. A passage like this should give Christians a marvelous self image, confidence, and trust to take their place in the world in which God has called them to participate.

Matthew 25:14-30

This passage of scripture, known famously as the Parable of the Talents or the Parable of the Three Servants, has direct implications regarding the stewardship of the calling of men and women to use their gifts and talents in their work. In this passage, a man goes on a long trip and entrusts to one servant five bags of silver, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last, and asks them to be good stewards of it. The men who took the bags of silver and invested it and made it grow -- who added value to it -- were praised. The man who just buried it in the ground was scolded and condemned because he did nothing with what was entrusted to his care. The lesson for God's people is that God has blessed each one of them in many ways and they are to take what He has provided and to invest it, to use it to help others flourish, and to add value to it, not just to keep it hidden in a vault so that it does not grow. Another lesson is that He has given some more talents and others perhaps a small amount of talent, but each is responsible for

only the talent that he or she has been given. Your talents cannot be compared with the talents of Billy Graham, but only the talents with which the Lord has given you.

Character

1 Timothy 3:9

1 Timothy 3:9 says, “They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.” This passage speaks to leadership and integrating one’s theology into one’s work. This passage relates specifically to the qualifications of deacons for service in the church. It also shows that an individual who wants to make an impact for Christ with his or her life must have a good, clear grasp of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. As Dr. Hendricks of Dallas Theological Seminary says, “If you want to pass something on, you have to have the real disease.” (Class Lecture, 1987 DTS) One who is trying to integrate theology into work must be grounded and growing in Christ. Development of your faith in Christ is as important as the development of your professional skills. Rev. Terry Johnson, the senior minister of Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia says, “The Christian faith leaves no realm untouched. Its blessed tentacles reach into every corner of existence,” (Johnson 2009, 39).

Matthew 6:1-4

This passage applies to leadership and character development. It is a reminder that Christians are not to do their “...good deeds publicly, to be admired by others.” Jesus condemns this behavior because it has the stench of hypocrisy attached to it. It is easy for Christians to talk the talk and not walk the walk of Christ. It is all too often tempting for

Christians to make sure they are noticed by others when they do Christian things publicly, like praying with someone publicly so that they may be seen as a Christian or a spiritual person. Boasting about how charitable they are would fall into this category as well. When these things are done for eye service of men, they usually have the reverse effect of helping to influence someone spiritually, especially when there are other public character flaws in a person's life. If a person loses his temper easily or if he finds himself telling coarse jokes in public but then attempts to put on the persona of an abiding deep spiritual life, this does not come off well.

2 Peter 1:3-11

This is a classic passage of character development. In integrating faith and work, Christians must understand how to grow in their faith and character by the building blocks outlined in these verses. They must realize that God has given them everything they need in order to grow in Him and live godly lives (v.3). They must also apply their faith that is a gift of God and remember His promises so that they can make every effort to respond to God's promises by supplementing their faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, knowledge, and self-control along with patient endurance, godliness, and love. This requires an effort on their part to grow as Christians, to be involved in community, to know God's word, and to pray, all the while knowing that this is possible because of what God has done for them.

Daniel 6:1-10

This scripture encourages Christian employees how to integrate their theology into their work to make an impact for Christ and live a life of integrity in a pluralistic environment. This passage speaks to how significant a role a leader plays in influencing others. An article by Chuck Swindoll (1999) expositis this passage crisply and simply. Swindoll states that in this passage, Daniel displays four marks of integrity and character. The first mark displayed by Daniel is an excellent attitude (Swindoll, 1999). Daniel 6:3 says, “Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him.” Swindoll writes,

Now if you want to be a person of integrity, you must begin deep within, with your attitude. It’s so easy to mask our lives and look as though our attitude is good when in reality it isn’t and one of the first places this shows up is in the realm of our work. It’s significant that there was no jealousy in Daniel’s heart against those other two men who were appointed as commissioners. He could have been threatened, he could have been competitive, he could have been rather nasty and ugly in his responsibilities, because he had the longest time in the kingdom. Long before those men had even come upon the scene, he had been in authority under previous monarchs. But because he possessed that “extraordinary spirit”, the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. (Swindoll 1999, 6)

The second mark of character is that Daniel was faithful in his work (Swindoll, 1999). What an incredible compliment to someone from their co-workers to be thought as one who is faithful to his work. Daniel 6:4 says, “ Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint again Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no grounds for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him”.

Sometimes Christians will use their faith as a reason others should do business with them, as if they are obligated, because of the common faith they share, to work a

business deal with them. Christians should be performing excellent work without having to proclaim their faith verbally. Daniel carried out his work excellently all the while being understated in his verbal confessions of his faith.

The third work of character found in this chapter is personal purity (Swindoll 1999, 7). The last part of Daniel 6:4 states about Daniel that “no error or fault was found in him.” Daniel was a solid man of character and it is easy to see why King Darius put such trust in him. This is a reminder that it is what you are, not who you know, that makes you a person of character and influence.

The fourth work of character displayed in this passage is a consistent walk with God (Swindoll 1999, 7). In Daniel 6:10 Daniel knew a document had been signed by the king that no one must worship or make petition to anyone but the king, but he still went to his home as he did every day “where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.” He was committed to walk with God in spite of the fact that it could cause him to be charged with a capital offense, which is exactly what happened. His enemies knew that he prayed and they lured the king into signing this law without understanding the unintended consequences. Daniel did not flaunt his faith in eye service, but he was determined to be consistent with it. He was not one who prayed just when he was in a panic, but he knew the importance of walking with God daily. Anyone desiring to integrate theology into work could do well to follow the example of Daniel.

Luke 16:10-11

This passage says, “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust you to true riches?”

These verses speak as well to the importance of character in the life of a Christian and to the attention to detail by Christians in the very little things of life. In these verses, Christ is communicating that if one expects responsibility in large affairs, then one must show responsibility in small affairs first. If one seeks to bring faith to bear on work, then faithfulness and responsibility must be a hallmark of one’s life.

Titus 2: 9-10

Titus 2:9-10 says, “Slaves are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.”

In the New Testament, the institution of slavery is never condemned but it is also never described as good in itself. In this passage, Paul writes of a commendable attitude of respecting those in authority that slaves are to have in their life. This attitude is certainly applicable to people in the workforce today and following this advice of respecting those whom we report to can again lead to a powerful application of theology into work. It is very easy in our day and age to not be respectful to those in authority such as supervisors and managers. R.C. Sproul writes,

Christian slaves in Paul’s day had some of the greatest opportunities to bear witness to the truth of the gospel. The lazy, good for nothing slave was a stereotype of Cretan culture, and believing slaves who were well pleasing to their masters could pique their owners’ interest in the motivation behind their service,

namely, Jesus Christ. So, being well pleasing through hard work and not pilfering the many possessions of their owners to which they had access was one of the best ways for a slave to demonstrate his faith in a tangible way (Sproul 2009, 59).

Christians are to be trustworthy, responsible, and obedient to those whom God has placed in positions of authority.

Daniel 1:1-21

This passage from Daniel is very helpful in giving direction and encouragement to Christians who work in pluralistic environments. To summarize the passage, Daniel and his friends are young boys living in Jerusalem. They have been taken into captivity by the Babylonians, taken to Babylon and placed into a leadership training program. These verses show the gifts and skills of Daniel in that he was a “youth without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in wisdom, endowed with knowledge understanding and learning and competent”(v. 3).

Daniel had determined in these verses that he would not defile himself spiritually and this sets up how this man of God is able, with his God given wisdom, to skillfully maintain the integrity of his faith and worship of God, yet function in a pluralistic setting.

This passage is useful in helping Christians to live and work in a very pluralistic environment, even one that may be hostile to their faith.

This passage answers three very crucial questions according to RTS President Dr. Mike Milton.

- How a believer must live in times of Apostasy.
- How a believer may follow the Lord in the most secular of conditions.

- How a follower of Christ can trust Christ even when it seems He is not in control (Milton 2009, 7).

Daniel and his friends have been removed from their homes in Jerusalem and transported far away to the foreign land of Babylon. God has called Daniel to follow Him in a foreign land. But Daniel demonstrates that he is in a place where the Lord is still sovereign and working mightily behind the scenes with the most powerful political and military figure of his time, King Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel chooses to live a holy life and that has a powerful impact for the Lord. The outward situation of Daniel and his friends changed, but their true identity did not change. They continued to worship the Lord. They compromised in a few areas of insignificance, but they refused to compromise in their worship practices. They displayed respect to those in authority over them by suggesting ways that they could practice their faith that would be amenable to the authorities. This author talks to people who say, “I don’t understand why God put me under this boss. He doesn’t know the Lord.” Or, “Why the Lord put me in this place that is so ungodly, I will never know.” They may never know why, but they are there. What is more important is that He is there. If a person’s identity is in Christ, it doesn’t matter if he is in Babylon or anywhere else. The truth is that Christians carry Christ with them wherever they go.

These young men are told to eat the king’s food and drink the king’s drink. The reasons are not completely clear in the text, but since it says Daniel refused to defile himself, it is likely the food had been offered to Babylonian idols (Milton 2009, 5).

Milton writes that,

True holiness is a life consumed with the love of God in Christ. True holiness is not religiosity or a goody two shoes holiness. That kind of pseudo-holiness cannot

withstand the heat of the wilderness or the temptations of Babylon. That kind of holiness cannot withstand the promise of greatness that will come if only you consume the idolatrous food and drink, if only you will bend the knee. (p. 5)

Daniel chose a simple diet and the Lord honored him. The testimony of Daniel was established. The rest of the book tells of how God used him to speak to a secular nation, to show God's sovereignty over all things, to prophesy concerning Jesus Christ and to establish the Lordship of Christ for human history. All of this started with a small act of obedience.

This has applications for Christians in many different stations of life. For those working in difficult companies, their work setting can be seen as similar to Babylon and they can take courage and inspiration from Daniel to be obedient in small things. This can lead to a powerful integration of theology into work.

Leadership

Deuteronomy 17:18-20

Deuteronomy 17:18-20 says,

And when he sits on the throne, of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

This text is foundational to the idea of leadership and the integration of one's theology into one's work. It is part of the second reading of God's important instructions to the Israelites before they go into the promised land. These instructions are the

important matters they are to attend to if they are going to be God's people in a foreign land. This passage is written to the leader of the Israelites to show him the vital importance of having God's word with him, to read and study and know it as it will help establish the proper relationship with the Lord. God's word will help the leader make wise decisions. Following the word and honoring the Lord will lead to long life and success.

This is equally true for Christians desiring to think in a Christ-like way in order to impact and shape their culture and workplace for Christ. A leader must have real faith. A leader must read God's word on a regular basis. This author has found that it is easy to get spiritual amnesia about the power and promises of God. Being in His word regularly helps remind and encourage the author to rely on God for strength and grace to accomplish what God has planned for him.

Nehemiah 8:10-11

Nehemiah 8:10-11 says, "Then he said to them, 'Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our LORD. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.' So the Levites calmed all the people saying, 'Be quiet for this day is holy; do not be grieved.'"

This passage from Nehemiah refers to an event where the people who were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem were threatened and discouraged and yet they finished the difficult task of rebuilding the walls in record time. In this success, the builders were reminded by Nehemiah and the Levites that the keys to their success were in worshipping the Lord and praising Him for these gifts.

This passage again speaks to leadership in that the leader who is out in front, the Christian who is trying to have an impact in his workplace for Christ, can often become worn down from the stresses and strains of life. The grind of the world of work can take the joy out of life. This passage reminds Christians that the joy of the Lord is their strength. Work will have its ups and downs, but for the believer, true joy and strength come from a relationship with the Lord. Nehemiah as the leader of the people knew the reality of discouragement, challenges, and roadblocks. He also knew that the vital element of pushing through these challenges was deeply imbedded in his relationship with the Lord. God gave him strength, joy, and wisdom to accomplish his tasks and purpose. He gives this to his people today, and uses this to build their faith and helps them to have an impact on their world.

John 13:3-8

John 13:3-8 says,

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, rose from the supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. And so He came to Simon Peter. He said to him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter'. [NASB]

This passage provides an example of developing servant leadership. This is important for Christians desiring to impact their place of work and to integrate their theology into their leadership style. Christ in this passage takes on the role of a servant, to cleanse the dust from the disciples' feet. It would become clear to them after the resurrection that He will not be like an earthly king, with great wealth and political

power. He takes on a very humble role to show the disciples that they need cleansing of their souls and that His death will lead to that cleansing. Through His example, Christ is also again showing them that leadership has far more implications than just communicating information. Leadership involves belief, action, involvement, and putting others' needs before your own. The Christian leader must put the needs of those he is leading before his own needs. The Christian leader must be careful that he does not use his position for self glorification and self centered power. Instead he should use power and service for encouraging others and serving the. This is the essence of servant leadership. The passion of loving Christ is proven when we live for others and not for building up ourselves. Following this model of leadership enables the Christian to make the "redemptive turn" (Blunt 2009, 5). This is the point in a leadership journey where a person takes an office of power and authority and uses it to align with the organization and give this power in service to people and the culture of the company. This redemptive turn is modeled by Christ here in this passage where He takes on a servant's role to minister to the disciples. He knows their deepest needs are for salvation and not to have powerful authoritative roles like a politician might display.

Prayer and Planning

Proverbs 21:5

Proverbs 21:5 says, "The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty."

This passage deals with how planning combines with faith. Christians trust in a sovereign Lord who knows all and controls all, however, this is no excuse for not

exercising proper planning in accomplishing the work the Lord has given them to do. Hard work and planning are all part of exercising and integrating faith into work.

Proverbs 21:31

Proverbs 21:31 says, “The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.”

This passage teaches that Christians must do everything humanly possible to prepare for the work that God has for them. Just as one works hard to train a horse for battle, to make sure it is properly fed, emotionally ready and properly saddled and outfitted for the battle, so Christians must plan and prepare diligently for the work that God has called them to. To do anything less would lack professionalism. Proverbs commends hard work and planning and yet it also emphasizes that God is sovereign in all things and ultimate victory comes from Him. This means Christians should get the best education they can, use the best materials at their disposal, and plan and prepare thoroughly, but they should not be arrogant and trust in their planning and preparation. Christians’ trust needs to be in the Lord.

Nehemiah 1 and 2

Nehemiah is living almost 2,000 miles away from Jerusalem in the Persian capital of Susa. He hears that the walls of Jerusalem are broken down exposing the whole city to bandits and any one who chooses to exploit them. Nehemiah prays a lengthy prayer in chapter one, fasts and seeks God’s wisdom as well as for God’s forgiveness.

Four months later after he has been praying, the text mentions his important connections as a trusted confidant of the Persian king. The king asks what is it that has been bothering Nehemiah. Nehemiah sees this as God's providence and he prays and begins to list out his concerns for Jerusalem and he seeks the king's favor on his well thought out plan to go back and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

This passage shows the outworking of faith in the workplace combined with planning and prayer. Nehemiah in chapter one hears the report about Jerusalem and he prays about it. Most of chapter one records his beautiful prayer. It is quite obvious from the text that he is burdened by Jerusalem having no walls. He prays about this to the Lord. He also has begun a process of planning to go back to Jerusalem if the Lord provides the opportunity. Four months later, chapter two explains that the king inquires about his sadness. Nehemiah reiterates in 2:4, "So I prayed to the God of heaven." Nehemiah then begins laying out before the king a detailed plan of what he desires to do in going back to Jerusalem and rebuilding the walls. Nehemiah has thought about how long this will take. He has planned out the materials he will need for the rebuilding. He has thought through the need for letters of passage (passport) from the king that will be needed for the journey. He recognizes that "... the good hand of my God was upon me." (2:8) On arriving in Jerusalem, he is wise in researching and assessing the extent of the repairs that are needed. The text says he rode around the walls under moonlight to determine how bad the damage to the walls was.

Nehemiah continually points the people to God's protection and grace and His sovereignty over them and this motivates the people. There is a clear connection between

the spiritual refreshment of the people and their growing desire to fall into God's redemptive plan of rebuilding their walls.

Nehemiah 4:7-20

Nehemiah has organized the workers very efficiently and the work is rapidly moving forward. Certain other foreigners have heard what Nehemiah is doing in Jerusalem. They dislike the news of the rebuilding of the walls and plan to stop Nehemiah's progress. Nehemiah, when he hears of these plots against him, goes to prayer and encourages the builders that God's hand was upon them. He orders them to keep weapons at the ready for self defense should they be needed as they continue the work of rebuilding the broken down walls of Jerusalem.

This passage from Nehemiah illustrates how integration of theology works in the real world. Opposition to the rebuilding of the walls has risen. Nehemiah points the people to the Lord, he offers prayers and seeks God's help. He also, though, plans well and prepares for a security perimeter around their operation. He reminds the workers of God's plan and how they are a part of it, then he makes sure they return to work and that they have weapons and lookouts and a plan in place to alert them in case of an attack. Nehemiah understands reality and has a great grasp of how theology integrates with work in this situation. He trusts God, but he also uses the sound mind God has given him. He realizes the effects of the Fall and that men do terrible things to each other and therefore need to be ready to protect themselves. Nehemiah had a clear grasp of Proverbs 21:31 "A horse is prepared for battle, but victory comes from the LORD."

Ethics

Proverbs 28:6, 7

Proverbs 28:6, 7 says, “Do not eat the bread of a man who is stingy; do not desire his delicacies, for he is like one who is inwardly calculating. ‘Eat and drink!’ he says to you, but his heart is not with you.”

This passage confirms that scripture speaks clearly of the interrelationship of theology and ethics. This passage explains that a person may seem on the outside to be very generous, but he may be doing this act of generosity for selfish gain rather than to meet a need in another’s life. People can be tempted to justify everything they do before the Lord, even trying to twist scripture to justify ungodly behavior. God’s word, not human experience, needs to be the plumb line of all matters of life and faith.

Proverbs 2: 6-12

Proverbs 2:6-12 says,

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you, delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech.

This passage speaks to ethics and the integrating of theology into work by teaching that God’s word contains the outstanding ethical guidelines for His people to follow. Christians who want to be ethical must begin with a relationship with Christ. Such a relationship is the living embodiment of wisdom given here in this proverb. Secondly, they must know the scriptures, treasure them, and apply them to their lives on a

daily basis. This, as the Proverbs passage explains, requires a lot of effort, energy and discipline. To seek wisdom “like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures” (v. 4) requires diligence, digging, and disciplined application of prayer and time spent studying God’s word. This passage states that if a person does these things, part of the benefit will be a protection from falling into the snares of relativism and crossing over into unethical areas of life and work. The proverb uses terms like “shield” (v. 7), “guarding” (v. 8), “watching” (v. 8), and “understanding righteousness and justice and equity...and knowledge” (v. 9, 10). If Christians are to be ethical, walking with God will assist them to walk in the highest ethical path. This path is contrasted here in this proverb by the unethical path of darkness and illegal and perverse behavior (v. 14, 15). It is foundational in integrating theology into work to have this high view of God’s word and its daily applications.

Proverbs 3:13-18

Proverbs 3:13-18 says,

Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand: in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed.

This passage speaks to Christian ethics in that wisdom that is found in Christ is incredibly valuable and is worth more than silver and gold. Some might say that living ethically will cut your profit. Passages such as this show that living ethical lives and conducting work in ethical ways often leads to an improved bottom line, economically speaking as well as spiritually. The capital of good will, treating people fairly, and having

a good reputation is priceless. This is motivation for living ethically and this is a by-product of our relationship with Christ.

Proverbs 10:9

Proverbs 10:9 says, “Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.”

Living a life of integrity leads to security in knowing you are living a life of pleasing God and man. It is a certain blessing of peace and comfort to be working and knowing the blessing of God and His favor and to know that you are building into others to help them flourish, and not trying to cut corners and cheat them. When Christians conduct themselves with integrity in their work, they can have peace and walk in the comfort and confidence that both God and man approve of their work. It is helpful when faced with an ethical issue at work to ask the questions: 1) Would I like to see this exposed on the front page of the newspaper; 2) Would I be proud for my wife and children to know about this decision; and 3) Would this harm anyone.

Proverbs 22:1

Proverbs 22:1 says, “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.”

This passage addresses the importance of our reputation and its link to being considered a person or a company of integrity and honesty. One’s reputation is earned over a long period of time, and goes ahead before one to pave the way ahead of us. It is easy to lose a reputation by making poor choices. One cannot buy a good reputation; it

must be earned and polished every day. The proverb tells us it is far greater than riches, silver, and gold. A reputation for ethical practice may be accompanied by increasing value financially. This passage reminds us that in dealing with other people and other companies in the workplace, a good reputation is priceless.

Devotional Life

Acts 3:19-22

Acts 3:19-22 says,

Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago. Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.

This passage refers to the need of the Christian to be devoted to Christ. This is an absolute for a Christian who desires to integrate theology into work. Christians must have a deep and abiding faith in Christ and then make daily devotion to Christ a priority. Times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” It is through this devotion to Christ through studying God’s word on a daily basis that Christians are refreshed spiritually and thus as an overflow from this vibrant spiritual life, they are better suited to have their faith shape their culture and work.

Nehemiah 8:8-10

Nehemiah 8:8-10 says,

They read from the book, from the law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all

the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept as they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our LORD. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

This passage supports the need for Christians who desire to impact their workplace to be devoted to hearing God's word and to allow it to sink into the marrow of their lives. The word of God is always a reminder of the truth that God wants to relate to us. It has an effect of encouraging us in our faith and our emotions and will. This is important to understand as Christians serve Christ through their work, that even when things are difficult, the "joy of the LORD is our strength" (v.10). God's word must be read on a regular basis if Christians desire to have faith shape work.

Romans 12:1, 2

Roman 12:1-2 says,

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Right thinking is necessary to right living. For Christians, the beginning of right thinking occurs at the time a person is saved and regenerated. Before people have been regenerated, their thoughts and lives tend to lean towards the world. With the Holy Spirit, comes a new mind ready to receive God's truth and to follow God's will. It is important to live a life of repentance and following Jesus Christ as Lord in order to be used by Christ to have a positive impact in the workplace and to successfully integrate theology into work.

This chapter has highlighted the major biblical and theological information used to show how a Christian executive can integrate his theology into his work. If one is to allow one's faith to shape their work life, one must know scripture and how it applies to the workplace. This will help them to use the wisdom of the scriptures to direct their work-life.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many excellent resources relevant to helping executives integrate their theology into their work. This section is divided under the eight sessions used in this project. The books, articles, and sermons that have influenced this project for each section will be discussed and analyzed.

Theology of Work

The excellent book *Doing God's Business* by R. Paul Stevens (2006) is one of the best in terms of discussing biblically a theology of work and how work relates to honoring and glorifying God. Stevens gives great encouragement to Christians who do not find themselves called to full time professional ministry, but find themselves called to secular work.

Stevens shows through various scriptures and arguments that all work is sacred and important, as long as it is not illegal and immoral, and that Christians in secular work should understand a sense of calling to that type of work.

Another very helpful book on the development and understanding of a proper biblical theology of work is *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* by Darrell Cosden (2006). Cosden is very helpful in this book in thinking through the biblical and theological implications of work here on Earth.

Cosden argues that our earthly work and toils as bankers, physicians, architects, hospital employees, or any other job has an eternal importance based on the bodily

resurrection of Christ as argued by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. He also develops part of his biblical theology of work from the book of Genesis in the creation accounts where God first gave the gift of work. (Gen 2:15) This book affirmed the biblical view that all work is important in God's eyes and there is no separation between so called sacred and secular work.

Cosden writes, "Believers desperately need to grasp why and how mission is what they, the whole people of God, are engaged in already while at work. More specifically, they need to grasp why and how the work itself that we do is a missionary activity rather than just an occasion for it," (p. 129). This difference has huge implications for freedom in serving Christ while pursuing excellence in the work that one has been called to.

Tim Keller, the Pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, has written several helpful articles and sermons. One of his articles is: *Work and Cultural Renewal* (2009) in which he discusses how Christians through their work help each other "think out the implications of the gospel for art, business, government, media, entertainment, scholarship, and we teach that excellence in work is a crucial means to gain credibility for our faith" (p. 2). His sermons offer helpful illustrations and real life examples.

Another valuable article to the subject of developing a theology of work is from Reformed Theological Seminary's Washington, DC professor, Hugh Welchel. It is titled: *How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work* (2009). Welchel covers the need for Christians to have a deeply imbedded theology of work. He describes how the reformers emphasized stewardship and service and contrasts it with the rise of communism and the Industrial Revolution (p. 7). He rightly points out that for

Christians today “our work matters profoundly to God...and we must rediscover that our primary vocation is the call to follow Jesus and realize that this call embraces the whole of our lives, including our everyday work. We cannot separate our spiritual lives from our so-called ‘secular’ lives and engage in dualism that is epidemic in Evangelical Christianity” (p. 12).

The author appreciates also Welchel’s understanding of the tension present in the scripture regarding work. He writes “you will not have a meaningful life without work, but you must not make your work the meaning of your life, as Christians we must find our identity in Christ, not in our work” (p.13).

Another small article that contributed to this project was the *Table Talk* devotional guide for Monday, January 18, 2010, 18. The writer expositis Genesis 1: 26-28: “...besides filling the earth, verse 28 explains that we are to subdue and exercise dominion over the world, not trashing or exploiting the planet, but cultivating its gardens, increasing its produce, and making it show forth the Lord’s glory more clearly”.

He continues with the thought that

...subduing the Earth involves anything over which we exercise wise stewardship. Every time a mother teaches her child a Bible verse, an accountant refuses to cook the company’s books, a flowering plant is pruned to increase its blooms and beauty, and so on, we are exercising the righteous dominion for which we were created.

Another important article was a front page cover story from *Fortune Magazine: God in Business* (July 9, 2001). This cover story article by a major business publication demonstrated how significant a person’s spiritual values were to them and how there is a movement now to allow the integration of faith into the workplace. The author used this article to encourage the two executives that the spiritual life of their employees is a very

important part of their lives and that they appreciate it when they are encouraged to attend to these needs in the workplace. You cannot separate theology from work, even though many attempt to do this. The article recognizes that a diversity of beliefs should be brought out into the open, recognized, and celebrated as a great value for a company.

This author discovered a growing body of literature which explores what it means to have a biblical theology of work. Yet there is much more that needs to be written on this subject. Although the book *Doing God's Business* by Paul Stevens was recommended to the two executives in this project. Both felt the book was a bit academic for their tastes and neither finished the book.

Calling

This author did not find a lot of material written about calling in regards to vocational work in the marketplace. Most of the books and material about calling seemed to relate specifically to the initial calling of Christians to place their faith in Christ. The existing material, however, is of a very high quality with excellent quotes and illustrations.

Doing God's Business by R. Paul Stevens (2006) gives some good coverage to the area of calling to vocations other than professional ministry. Stevens writes,

Without a sense of calling we become magicians, inventing the meaning of our lives through careerism and professionalism. We are susceptible to the siren calls of the media, which tells us that we find our identity in consuming or achieving. We are driven about like dust in a windstorm with no abiding sense of calling or direction. In contrast, a sense of calling gives our lives direction and purpose because our Creator summons us into personal relationships with God and into a wonderful purpose that will outlast the world" (p.20).

Another excellent book in helping Christians understand the important of their call to their vocation is *The Call* by Os Guinness (1998). The sense of calling by God to one's work as a banker, police officer, or floor sweeper is vitally important to people trying to integrate their theology into their work and serving God in the workplace. The book is an outstanding text on the implications of God's call on Christians' lives and to a life of stewardship. The book is beautifully written and is filled with powerful illustrations of how God's call affects every area of life.

Guinness states that understanding that God calls Christians has far ranging implications on their work. If they are called, then they are stewards of the caller. This implies that they are not just rambling through life doing as they please, but that they have gifts and talents that have been provided by the Caller (God) that they must exercise for the Caller. Life is a stewardship. People are not the owners, God is, and this makes a huge difference in the way they approach their work and those with whom they work.

Guinness points out that his great, great grandmother was on the verge of committing suicide by throwing herself into a river in England in 1815. She was stopped from this when she was stunned by the sight of a farmer on the other side of the river, who was totally oblivious to her observing him, who with "great meticulous, absorbed skill, he displayed such a pride in his work that the newly turned furrows looked as finely executed as the point strokes on an artist's canvas" (p. 184). Guinness says that his great, great grandmother was stopped from suicide because of the farmer doing his work in such an excellent way. A few weeks later, she came to faith in Christ and then soon after met and married Captain John Guinness, son of the great British brewer and great, great grandfather of the author, Os Guinness. His great, great grandmother was so impressed by

this incident that saved her life that she felt it important to write about it and pass it down through the family history. Here was a farmer committed to excellence in his work in 1815 and he is still being discussed and written about today for the impact he has made by doing his work well. It is a great picture of how God uses good, excellent work for His honor and glory.

“Calling, Work, and Rest” is another excellent article by Paul Marshall that has very pertinent theological discussions about God’s calling in Christians’ work. He has an excellent discussion of various cultural views of work from the ancient Greeks, who considered work as menial, up through the Protestant reformers who considered work a calling. He offers an excellent discussion on capitalism and work and how Christians can work out of their faith in a capitalistic society. He also offers significant thoughts on the call to rest and its theological and biblical ramifications for those who are truly trying to live biblically in the workplace.

Character

In developing this section of this project, the author found relatively few books that touch on character issues of a growing Christian and how this integrates with work. Since the worldwide recession, however, the author has noticed more articles being printed on the importance of character and integrity in the business world.

Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky (2002) is an exceptional book on leadership, ethics, and character. The writers develop the last section of the book by a discussion of the pitfalls

of thinking too much of yourself and what they call the danger zone of insatiability, that is never having enough.

They also offer insight for leaders in self care when they discuss the need for sanctuary and taking time to refresh yourself and also being careful in your leadership not to be too hardened by events that you might go through. These are issues of character and character development. You are to learn from things we go through, but also maintain freshness and wonderment about new things and new ideas, so that your hearts are open and you continue to learn.

The authors also write about the temptations that leaders face and some of the traps that have plagued leaders for centuries. They raise issues of the nature of authority and character and how to earn the respect, credibility, and authority from those you lead. What started out as a book that this author looked on initially with some degree of skepticism ended up engaging my mind and ministering to me in a significant way.

Leadership is an Art by Max DePree (2004) is another excellent book on the character and nature of leadership. DePree offers an excellent discussion of some of the non-quantitative aspects of leadership. The title is very apt -- speaking of the art of leadership -- in that there are some things about leadership that cannot be measured and distilled by balance sheets.

DePree hammers home the necessity of integrity in leadership, what that means, and how it affects an organization. He writes, "This lack of integrity is nourished by the inability of some leaders to understand the function of self-restraint in a civilized society" (p.10). An example is the fall of former New York, Governor Eliot Spitzer, who touted

integrity and crusaded against those who did not have it only to be exposed himself as one who lacked it because he could not restrain himself.

DePree shows great insight and wisdom in his argument for leadership integrity when he writes “our companies can never be anything we do not want ourselves to be...no company or institution can amount to anything without the people who make it what it is” (p.57). This seems to be the greatest challenge in leadership: leading yourself, and not falling into the trap of expecting more from others than you are willing to do yourself. You must lead from the front in the sense that I must set the pace for integrity and ethics and doing what is right if you want your company to be known as an ethical company. DePree further reiterates this point when he writes, “the corporation can never be something we are not” (p. 90). The company is made up of individuals and will reflect the lives of these individuals. Each and every employee and his or her integrity and commitment to excellence are important to the company. It reminds this author of the sign Coach Tom Landry, the legendary coach of the Dallas Cowboys had posted at the entrance of the tunnel at Texas Stadium that leads from the locker room to the football field. It reads, “The excellence of your play on the football field is in direct proportion to the excellence lived in your own private life.”

Another book on the subject of developing effective Christian influenced character based on leadership is *The Ascent of a Leader* by Thrall, McNicol and McElrath (1999). It offers an excellent discussion of the true nature of Christian leadership. The authors do a superb job in describing the essence of spiritual leadership. They use a ladder of ascent as a graphic to describe the necessary building blocks to significant and

effective Christian leadership. The first step in the ladder is developing a deep and abiding trust in the Lord.

McNicol and McElrath write, “if we trust in God, our faith will enable us to escape being molded by circumstances or seduced by opportunities as we strive to make the best choices” (p.64). This is the foundation stone of spiritual leadership. On this foundation or cornerstone, Christians build the rest of their lives. If their relationship with God is strong, daily, and enduring, then they will be better inclined to make wiser decisions and build trust and credibility.

They also write, “What we do matters less than who we are” (p. 180). Again, this goes back to character in which the bedrock is a vibrant relationship with Christ. This will overhaul Christians’ complete system of thought as opposed to the world’s system of thinking.

Another excellent book in the area of character development, is the book by Os Guinness: *Character Counts* (1999). This book discusses the vital influence of the character of the leader and the compounding implications of a moral leader choosing to following moral law.

Guinness describes how Dr. Martin Luther King deliberately set upon a course of non-violence to gain civil rights for minorities in this country. Dr. King helped to hold the nation together when it could have gone down a much more violent pathway than it did. He chose a moral path based on his character just as President Lincoln had done 100 years before.

Dr. King and President Lincoln were both men that sought to do what was right and pursued a moral law. This emanated from their character which came from their

relationship with Christ. They both believed they were following the leading of God's providence and this sustained them when things became very difficult and when criticisms mounted.

Elton Trueblood writes on President Lincoln's understanding of the moral law and God's hand of providence,

He grew convinced that our universe, far from demonstrating a merely mechanical order, is a theater for the working out of moral law. If he were alive today, he would not be surprised at the continued agony that marks the relationship of black people and white people, not only in American, but also in many other parts of the world. The mills of the moral order, he thought, grind slowly, but they grind relentlessly (p. 123).

Integrity, honesty, and a reputation for caring for people will propel you to moral leadership even though you may not have a formal office of leadership. This book serves as a goad for Christians to continue to grow in character by growing in their relationship with Christ and to live that out in the workplace which Christ has called them to.

Another article the author used in this project was written by Rev. Chuck Swindoll on the biblical character of Daniel. It is titled *Daniel's Integrity – The Mark of Godliness* (1999). In this article, he writes an exposition of Daniel's life of working and living in a hostile and foreign environment and how Daniel did not compromise his faith, but was able through three different governmental administrations to have influence through his faith. Swindoll focuses much of his discussion on chapter six of the book of Daniel where he writes of his excellent attitude, his personal purity, his consistent walk with God, and faithfulness in his work. These four building blocks of Daniel help make him the effective leader of integrity and influence that he is. He serves as an excellent model of the importance of character to leadership and how these two are integrated into his work as a government official.

Leadership

Built to Last by Jim Collins (2004) is an excellent book can be used to help other leaders integrate their theology into their work. Collins has analyzed great companies of the last 200 years and explores the reasons why they have sustained themselves over the long run in business. One would be led to think that these companies all began with great ideas with great dynamic personalities as leaders. Collins argues in this book that nothing could be further from the truth.

Collins writes of the “myth of the Great Idea” that Disney, Hewlett-Packard, 3-M, Sony, and Wal-Mart all began much differently than what we know of them today Sam Walton in an interview in the *New York Times* commented, “but I always had confidence that as long as we did our work well and were good to our customers, there would be no limit to us” (p. 25). Walton built up Wal-Mart incrementally, step by step, from a single store until the great idea of a rural discount store popped out as a natural evolutionary step almost two decades after he started his company. This book reaffirmed that good old fashioned hard work pays off. If you focus on the building blocks of your business, treat your customers well, and seek to honor Christ through your work, then the sky is the limit on what you can accomplish.

Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky (2002) is another book on leadership. It gives an excellent description of what it is like to lead and how to avoid the perils that leaders face. I initially thought this was just another typical book about “worldly” secular wisdom of leading and manipulating people in order to achieve your own objectives. I was delightfully surprised, however, as I read through this book and saw the value it has

for helping Christians become good leaders. If Christians are to shape the culture of their workplace and have their faith inform their work life, then leadership is a skill that must be continually developed and it is a critical area of faith in the workplace.

The two authors have stumbled upon Christian and biblical truth throughout the book. For instance, the authors write, “start where people are at” (p. 53), when they describe the need for leaders to engage and not be tempted to isolate themselves. This goes to the core of the wisdom of Proverbs that with many counselors there is wise guidance and victory. The authors write realistically about the temptations leaders face and how to avoid falling into some of the traps that have plagued leaders for centuries. They raise great issues on the nature of authority and how to earn the respect and credibility and authority from those you lead. The authors discuss the importance of modeling in leading. They use the example of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who modeled the heroics he was asking of others by putting himself in harm’s way, going to ground zero over and over again, barely escaping being injured himself on September 11 when the World Trade Center Towers fell” (p. 95). In terms of spiritual leadership, I believe this genuineness to be so important in leading others and earning the right and the authority to minister. The Christian must walk the talk, it must be real, and not mere window dressing if you are to affect people’s lives for Christ. The people whom you work with will watch you and will know if you are genuine or not. And rest assured, they are watching us and are really hoping that we are real and genuine as we seek to integrate our theology into our work.

Another book pertinent to discussing leadership and integrating theology into work is the book *Good to Great* (Harper Collins, 2001) by Jim Collins. Collins has

stumbled upon timeless biblical principles that executives have used to help their companies move from being good to truly being a great enduring company. Collins states that leading a company from good to great essentially comes down to great leadership. His discovery of great leadership, though, is counter to what the current media would portray as a great leader. Collins says, “larger than life, celebrity leaders who ride in from the outside are negatively correlated with taking a company from good to great” (p. 10). He highlights two men who have had an influence in the author’s life, Admiral James Stockdale, who was the President of the Citadel, the author’s alma mater, and Coleman Mockler, the former CEO of Gillette, who is also a philanthropic guiding benefactor of the author’s program of study at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Collins cites Admiral Stockdale for his leadership ability as a senior POW in Vietnam who had an unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, and at the same time have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts about your current reality.

Collins praised Mockler for his high values in not selling out Gillette to corporate raiders even though “he himself would have pocketed a substantial sum on his own shares” (p. 23). Mockler is praised as being a “quiet and reserved man, always courteous and gracious, a patrician gentleman whose reserved nature was not a weakness at all” (p.23). The book mentions that Mr. Mockler is religious, but through his reputation and his generosity this author is a beneficiary of his vision and generosity and faith in Christ through the Doctor of Ministry program at Gordon-Conwell.

This author disagrees with Collins’ idea that labeling these good to great leaders “servant leaders” (p. 30). makes them seem meek or sound weak. Collins feels that the

term “servant leader” merely describes the humble side and not the tenacious side, but the biblical model of Christ is as a servant leader, who has great humility, but also is steadfast and tenacious in his pursuit for the redeeming work of God on the Earth.

Collins also wrote of the leaders’ responsibility to put “the right people on the bus” (p. 42). People who are well trained and have impeccable credentials but do not have passion and a good attitude about their work can cause major problems and delays in the progress of the company becoming great. People with good attitudes and passion can be trained to do a lot of things, but a great attitude cannot be taught.

Collins also highlighted the nature of status and authority of the leader. He writes, “Status and authority come from your leadership capabilities, not your position” (p. 138). It is not what title you hold that gives us leadership authority, but it is who you are as people of character which gives you that authority. When you lean on titles for authority is when you lose ground. Leadership and authority have to be earned every day as Christians live their lives for Christ and for others.

The Apostle Paul poured himself out as an offering to the Lord. He followed the model of Christ and Stephen and therefore was given great authority by the church.

An article relevant to leadership and integration of faith into work was an interview with Dr. Will Messenger by the e-newsletter *The High Calling of our Daily Work* (October 19, 2008). In this interview, Messenger specifically lays out how his own personal faith in Christ has implications for his work through his leadership. He uses the example of his involvement with power generation in China when he was a financial analyst. He found himself working in non-redemptive ways which rewarded him financially by making deals rather than really adding long term value to the company or

its investors. He shares a story of how he made the redemptive turn in his leadership as an investment banker and as a Christian. He was able to help the company recapitalize itself by issuing preferred stock and using the proceeds to pay off debt which in turn gave this company a more secure financial base, so they could focus on the growth of the business. This is truly adding value to the company and its investors for the long term and is a perfect example of redemptive leadership.

Prayer and Planning

This author found no significant books that were written to address the integration of theology into work that specifically discuss the area of prayer and planning in work. This is an area that scripture discusses and gives significant examples, but the current market of books and articles is significantly lacking. The author did find a few articles regarding the issue of prayer and planning. *Tackling Workplace Problems with Prayer* (Murray, October 19, 1995) was one article that discussed specific ways Christians in the workplace were praying for the issues that they face in business.

The book *Be My Guest* (Hilton, 2009), a biography on the famous hotelier and founder of the Hilton Hotels, specifically discusses how he would pray as part of his regular business practices and seek the wisdom of God for business purposes. Other than these two works, this author did not find much written material on this subject matter. It is certainly an area that could use more writing and development.

Ethics

There were a number of articles that were very helpful in creating this module on ethics for this project.

One article on ethics and work that was appealing was *The Portrait on my Office Wall* by John Rutledge (December 30, 1996). Rutledge writes about how to conduct business negotiations with others in an ethical way. He states, “Allowing your opponent in a transaction to walk away with his dignity, his honor and his hearing intact, and a pretty good deal in his pocket, is the right way to do business” (p. 78). The article is not labeled a Christian article nor does the author claim to be a Christian, but the principles espoused are those of a biblical nature that should come to bear on all who seek to integrate their faith into their work. He emphasizes “doing the right thing” and that “right and wrong are powerful concepts” (p. 78). He discusses the important transparency with others in business dealings and giving the other party a fair deal. He writes, “Leave something on the table. The best business deal isn’t the one that maximizes your advantage or your profits. It is the one in which you maximize the chance that the next time you run into the person you will be glad to see each other”. (p. 78)

He states that timeless biblical principles are “often more successful and make more money than those organized around the idea that greed is good – nice guys often finish first” (p. 78). Christians have multiple bottom lines to fulfill in their work.

This author found another Rutledge article as well from *Forbes Magazine* titled *Teaching Things that Really Matter* (March 10, 1997). In this article, Rutledge highlights the three bedrock essentials for business success:

- 1) an understanding that a good reputation is a major form of capital; 2) an ability to distinguish between people who are trustworthy and those who are not; 3) the

realization that it is okay to fail, so long as you get back up, dust yourself off and try again. There is such an emphasis on being cool, and on being a winner in sports, on television, and in advertisements, that we are forget what a valuable teacher losing can be. Most of the people who have built great companies didn't hit a home run their first time at bat. More than any business professor could, not being able to make payroll will sear the importance of cash flow into your brain (p. 73).

Dennis Rainey, the Director of the Family Ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, wrote a very good article on being trustworthy, reliable and faithful and what a powerful value this is. In the article, he exhorts the reader of the authentic power of a life of value, of character, of faithfulness, and how this is rooted in a biblical theology for Christians. He finishes with a great quote from Albert Einstein who once said to a group of aspiring young scientists, "Gentlemen, try not to become men of success, rather try to become men of value" (Family Life, 1993, 2).

I also was influenced by an article from *Leadership Magazine* by Eugene Peterson (1990) which is titled *The Jonah Syndrome: When Misdirected Zeal Replaces Holy Ambition, We embark on a long Obedience in the Wrong Direction*. All people are sinful human beings. Most will stumble and fall a few, if not many times in their lives. It is important for Christians to know how to get back on track when they fall if they have been derailed in their efforts to walk with Christ. This article based on the accounts of Jonah expositors how Christians should deal with failure before the Lord.

This writer found sermon notes from Rev. Timothy Keller of New York City's Redeemer Presbyterian Church talking about ethics. In this sermon (2009), Dr. Keller speaks of the interaction in the marketplace between money and ethics and that in the short run having high ethics can cost you money, because you are not going to cheat or cut corners. "Sin makes us want to be owners, but we become embezzlers because we

take God's gifts and begin to take credit for it and act like we did something special; we are stewards of the wealth God has given us since the Garden of Eden in Genesis" (Faith and Work).

Keller exhorts his listeners in the sermon to find non self-righteous ways to get their companies to rethink the way they do things. He encourages Christian businessmen to meet regularly with each other and with ministers and brainstorm how to respond to ethical situations from a biblical perspective. He also clearly explains that as Christians in the marketplace, we have multiple bottom lines; not just profit, but treating people fairly and doing right things, being a steward over all that God has placed us in.

Another profitable article in the area of ethics was by a Harvard Business School professor, Lynn Paine, who wrote a book, *Value Shift* (Nov.18, 2002). Paine argues "companies can't consider themselves moral or apart from society any more – that the relationship between companies and society at large necessitates bringing a moral dimension to decision making" (p. 1). Good ethics are an investment, a piece of capital of the company and much more than just risk management. Ethics should be viewed as a long term projection of the company's reputation, a broad view that has "positive effects on work life, product quality, relationships with their constituencies of their standing in the community." (p. 35). Good ethics add to the bottom line over the long term which gives a company "better access to talent, enhanced employee commitment, better information sharing, great creativity, enhanced reputation, and so on" (p. 2). She warns in the article about the danger of businesses that just focus on the financial. As is well known through recent news media accounts, such as the Madoff Ponzi scheme, blatant unethical behavior can be enormously profitable in the short term. Slavery had its

financial benefits to its slave owners. Paine says that “virtually every case of misconduct that I’ve studied, the perpetrators justified their actions by reference to the anticipated financial gains” (p. 3).

One final article in the area of ethics from the *Wall Street Journal* focused on an interview with Whole Foods CEO, John Mackey (October 3, 2009). Mackey is attempting to do business in very ethical ways, building into his employees and recognizing that he has multiple bottom lines. Mackey says he is trying to save capitalism: “I think that business has a noble purpose. It’s not that there’s anything wrong with making money. It’s one of the important things that business contributes to society. But it’s not the sole reason that businesses exist” (p. 11). He is building a quality company with a quality product which is good for people.

Devotional Life

There are only a few books written to specifically address the importance of the devotional life of Christians as this relates to integrating their theology into their work. A few books that devoted chapters to this topic that were somewhat helpful. *Doing God’s Business* by R. Paul Stevens (2006) has a chapter that discusses the importance of being contemplative and devoting time to meditating and thinking on God and worshipping Him. Stevens, however, does not really give any specific helpful guidance into how this should be fleshed out.

The Little Red Book of Wisdom by Mark DeMoss (2007) has a specific chapter devoted to the encouragement and how to spend time in God’s word on a daily basis. DeMoss gives very specific examples and suggestions. He says, I am writing now, in

fact, to recommend that you undertake the brief discipline of reading one chapter of Proverbs each day...I discover new insights almost every single morning, reminders of timeless truths and principles for almost every aspect of life (p. 115).

He also gives the real life example of Dr. Billy Graham who said, "I read five Psalms every day that teaches me how to get along with God followed by a chapter of Proverbs which teaches me how to get along with my fellow man" (p. 115).

DeMoss shares the example of his own father, a businessman who integrated his theology into his work, when "I read sequentially each year through the Old and New Testaments, teaching me another truth—that a mind and character cannot be left to chance" (p. 115). Most of the books did not get very specific and it would be helpful to have books that would specifically show how one could have a vibrant devotional life.

The best and most helpful articles that the author found were from actual devotional guides which were a great encouragement to consistently be having a daily devotional time with the Lord and explaining and guiding how to specifically do this. *Table Talk* (Ligonier Press) is published monthly and contains daily articles and devotions from scripture. It also has a guide for annual reading through both Old and New Testaments which is very helpful in consistently and systematically reading through the Bible. It contains articles and questions to ponder which stimulate the integration of biblical knowledge into everyday practice and integration of Christian living.

This writer believes much more writing and direction could and should be done to offer practical specific insights as well as motivation for having a consistent, daily devotional life that is centered on God's word, prayer, and reflection.

Redemption Model for Faith and Work

There is very little material that discusses the particular Redemption Model for Faith and Work developed by Dr. Will Messenger and R. Paul Stevens. The use of this tool is for integrating one's theology into one's work in a very practical and specific way. This tool helps the Christian apply biblical principles and truth to specific issues that apply in the workplace and in life.

It requires knowledge of the scriptures and knowledge of problems and challenges faced in the workplace. Tim Keller suggested in a message that this is a great place for seminary trained ministers who know the Bible and who are able to connect with individuals in the workplace and together help each other to integrate theology into work. This model would be a struggle and challenge for one who is not very familiar with the Bible.

One book that is helpful in addressing Bible interpretation that is used in this model is *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Explaining the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* by William Webb (2001). This is a very difficult read, however, for the lay person. The title of this book is quite catchy and disturbing to some when they first hear it. The author offers a good argument for Christians about the seriousness of the study and interpretation of scripture and its meaning for Christians today. If one is to think Christianly, and that is the goal of the project, then one must know the Christian scriptures well.

Darrell Bock's writing in the foreword states that this book "is designed to make you consider why you apply scripture the way that you do no matter what position you take. Its thoroughness is one of its major strengths, as is its proposed solutions" (p. 10).

Webb argues that we must take what he calls a “redemptive movement hermeneutics” (p. 30). This view seemingly takes the entire course of scripture and places over it the view that in it is revealed God’s redemptive work from Genesis to Revelation with the goal of the redemption ultimately to be found in the ministry of Jesus Christ and His cross work. This model can be used in Messenger and Stevens Redemption Model for Faith and Work. Webb uses the example of the issues of slavery, women, and homosexuals and how these three issues have been interpreted and applied or misapplied through church history.

Webb writes, “along with the authority of scripture, the wisdom of God is probably the most significant theological category of understanding how a redemptive movement hermeneutics represents the best possible approach to scripture” (p. 57).

The class lecture of Dr. Messenger in the Gordon-Conwell Doctor of Ministry class (June, 2008) was most helpful in understanding how to apply the Redemption Model of Faith and Work. Dr. Messenger also led this writer’s cohort of Doctor of Ministry and MAR-BLE students along with the executive team of Freightliner Trucking Company at their corporate headquarters in Columbia, South Carolina through an actual ethical issue that this company’s executive team was facing. He walked us through the Redemption Model for Faith and Work and we achieved a quality response to the ethical issue that was well thought through both biblically and from a business perspective.

More work needs to be written about how to clearly apply this model.

This author has written of the major books and articles and sermons that were used to inform the creation and implementation of the eight sessions of this project. Some of the session subjects had many books and articles to choose from, however, there were

several subjects about which more writing needs to be done to in order to better address the integration of it specifically to theology and the workplace.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

How To Help A Christian Executive Integrate His Theology Into His Work

This chapter will lay out the actual design of this project to assist these two executives in the hospital integrate their theology into their work. I have developed eight modules.

This project will consist of my meetings with these two executives individually for one hour each, for eight weeks, to show work through the different modules.

The only homework I gave to the executives was to read the excellent book *Doing God's Business* by Paul Stevens. The eight modules are as follows:

1. Theology of Work
2. Calling
3. Character
4. Leadership
5. Prayer and Planning
6. Ethics
7. Devotional Life
8. Redemption Model of Faith and Work

I will lay out each session with the related Scripture passages, quotes, and questions for discussion.

I explained to the two executives that I wanted these sessions not to be lectures. I am aware of the tendency to want, in my exuberance and excitement, to dump a lot of

information that I have learned on to the two men. I feel the discussion method of conducting these sessions will engage the men and keep them attentive in addition to helping me to evaluate if they comprehend the concepts that I am attempting to communicate. See Appendix, page 78.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This project was designed to help two Christian hospital executives to be able to more fully integrate their faith into their work. This author met with each executive individually for eight weeks. In each weekly one hour session, I would cover one of the eight modules. I always began the session by talking with them about their past week. I met with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday morning for eight weeks. I met with the Administrator of Hughston Hospital from 9:30-10:30 a.m. each week immediately after the weekly chapel service at Hughston Hospital.

It was interesting to hear the different perspectives of the two men about what they were expecting. I had assigned them both to read *Doing God's Business* by Paul Stevens. Neither had finished the book by the time we started the project and neither was particularly gripped by the book. Both made promises to finish the book, but neither man completed the assigned reading. It was my thought that the book by Stevens would be an excellent introduction and resource for future reference, but they did not agree with me. Mr. Wheeler mentioned that the book seemed very "academic." The initial perspective of the Administrator of Hughston Hospital was that of wanting others to see Christ in him more by the way he lives his life than what he says. He was careful to brace this comment with a concern that he did not want to ever be accused of denying God. This executive has had complaints filed against him for his public expressions of faith.

The CFO was concerned that I was going to push him to being more “evangelistic” and publicly open to sharing his faith as a result of this project. He is very introverted and quiet about his faith, but has a very strong faith in Christ.

Both men were refreshingly surprised by the eight topics that I had selected for us to work through. I was very aware of the need not to do too much “preaching” or “teaching” through these sessions and desired for them to be conducted in a relaxed discussion, a give and take kind of a way. I did not require any homework before the sessions. I only urged the men to read the recommended text *Doing God’s Business* by Paul Stevens. I would sometimes mention the topic for the following week and offer a scripture passage for them to read if they wanted to look ahead.

I was cautiously aware as well of providing too much information in each of the sessions. I did not want the men to feel as though “they were drinking water from a fire hose.”

The scriptures, topics, and questions were carefully selected to attempt to understand the main point of each session.

I found that the men, even with incredibly busy schedules, seemed to enjoy and look forward to the sessions with me. Neither man had ever been asked to be a part of a one-on-one study and both found it to be spiritually refreshing. Neither man had really given a lot of in depth thought to the implications of his faith on his work.

As I began the sessions, both men were fascinated by God’s outline of work as found in Genesis 1:29 and 2:15 and that work was created by God for good and that part of our call to work as Christians is to add value, to make something better than what it was. Both were intrigued by the effects of the fall on work and both men could attest to a

long list of how they had personally witnessed the effects of the fall in their own work situations. I found throughout the eight weeks as I introduced each topic and accompanying Bible references, that the men enthusiastically would jump in with comments, thoughts, and questions.

Both began to grasp and understand a deeper meaning for God's plan for work. Both men love what they do and they began to see the intrinsic value of the work that God has for them. They both were intrigued by the session on calling and the understanding that the Bible does not distinguish clergy and laity. The Administrator at Hughston Hospital responded after our session on calling that he had now decided that he should not place an artificial retirement date on his career. If God had called him, it should be God who directs him when he should retire. He felt as part of his stewardship of his calling that an artificial date for retirement should not be a part of his plan.

Both men were very willing to discuss and open up to me about their work lives and real life situations they were facing. They said that the scriptures we studied in Daniel 1 and 2 Peter for the areas of character, integrity, and ethics were very helpful as they have both witnessed fraud and abuse. Even when we are held accountable by men and women who are not of faith, these passages serve as a guide and encouragement that one can still be faithful to God and serve excellently in character and proper ethics in their job.

The Administrator of Hughston Hospital was so intrigued by our session on ethics that he made it a part of his next leadership staff meeting. He learned the importance of our reputation and how this can be a form of capital that can be used for investment for good in the future that attracts new talent and keeps people wanting to work for you.

The Administrator of Hughston Hospital also grew in the area of personal witness for Christ. He previously had served in the leadership role of surgical services and he typically made early morning patient rounds that frequently resulted in opportunities to engage patients and family members in prayer. This pattern became so routine that it was a customary practice for him. However, corporate leadership became concerned and prior to agreeing to this promotion to the Administrator role, he was cautioned about the openness of this practice. He responded as a result of our study of theology of work that “consequently my personal witness had become more cautious and discerning. However, my Christian walk by example appears to have escalated and it is clear to every employee in the hospital of my passion and commitment to my faith and its incorporation into my daily walk and managerial focus.” (Wheeler, 2009)

The Chief Administrator of Hughston Hospital also had his perspectives of work transformed by our session on theology of work. He had previously misunderstood God’s plan for work and thought that it was a byproduct of the fall. He had mistakenly thought that work was a part of the curse of God and did not grasp that work was part of God’s gift to us. He told me that now he understands that God fully intended work before the fall for the benefit of mankind and as a way to honor and serve the Lord. “This discovery has been transforming in that my true feelings of joy in answering my present daily call to my profession are natural and personally fulfilling as opposed to a sentence for post transgressions...work now has a new meaning, one of real importance rather than mere penance and survival.”

In the sessions on leadership and how the Christian’s faith informs and shapes our leadership, we had very good discussions about when a leader makes the redemptive turn,

where he is serving the organization and its people. What makes it possible for us to make the redemptive turn? It occurs and is made possible for us by His grace which gives us the power to make the redemptive turn by humbling ourselves to the service of others and the organization. It comes from realizing that we are called, that we are stewards, not owners of the life God has given us. It comes from recognizing the temptation of the power to always want more than we should from the things of this world. This extends from the Garden of Eden where the tree was off limits, but Satan encouraged man to have more. The redemptive turn occurs spiritually, then physically. This is powerful information. I shared with the men when one of my mentors in high school took me and washed my feet and made me a part of the “order of the towel”, a group he had developed as part of a servant leadership program modeled on when Christ washed the disciples’ feet. This man was on the board of Coca Cola Company and listed on Forbes 400 of wealthiest people in America. It made a strong impression on me that leadership is different than what I thought it to be and that it involves the role of serving those whom God brings under your influence rather than using them for selfish ends.

The CFO confessed to me that for years he had personally struggled with the idea of his work having eternal value. He said growing up in a southern Baptist church background, that he fell into the belief in the hierarchy of spiritual jobs with the pastor, missionary, and evangelist at the top. He said he has come to realize that his work as CFO makes it possible for patient caretakers (physicians, nurses, etc.) to be able to do their jobs.

The Administrator of Hughston Hospital was asked to speak at a local prayer luncheon during the time we were working through the eight modules of how to integrate

theology into work. He spoke on the topic we had covered the week before: calling to our vocations and how we should not separate our work from our faith; that the two can be fully integrated. He has also allowed a local group of business men to come into the hospital one morning each week to have a prayer breakfast and Bible study in a private room off of our cafeteria.

He shared with me at the end of the sessions that the book, *Doing God's Business* by Paul Stevens, was, "excellent in content and very useful in terms of provoking thought but maybe more academic than what I prefer to study." (Wheeler, 2009) I have concluded that I need to find another book for the future use of this program that does not seem to be too lengthy and academic.

My personal reflections are that this was an excellent ministry opportunity for me to build a bridge of relationship and to minister to these two men in the executive suite. The material we covered was very worthwhile and stimulating. Both men reported being very much stimulated to grow in their faith as a result of their time with me. The Administrator of Hughston Hospital has asked me to continue to meet with him on a weekly basis to discuss the implications of our faith and work and have prayer together and to discuss how the resources of the Christian faith can help him in his work. We have been faithful to do this now for six months after finishing the eight sessions.

Both men greatly appreciated the redemptive model by Messenger and Stevens (2001). They both appreciated the necessity to connect their decision making to scripture in order to think in a Christian manner and have their faith impact their work.

I have received requests since I completed these modules to meet individually with a physician, a computer expert, and another chaplain to take them through the eight

modules. I also have been asked to lead a group of businessmen at a noon time study in a judge's office in downtown Columbus through the material on faith in the workplace.

This material is very much needed and I look forward to seeing God's plans for using it in the future. I have been asked to write an article of faith in the workplace for an e-newsletter and have also been asked to prepare a workshop on this project for use in companies as part of an employee assistance plan package.

I found preparing this project and implementing it to be most helpful to my own spiritual growth and greatly enhancing my own personal ministry as a hospital chaplain. Chaplains in the hospital are most often thought of as ministering to patients and families. This project has opened avenues for ministry for me to have influence with all types of people in all types of professions throughout the hospital. I have found myself using it to encourage even the custodial staff in their work as well as to neurosurgeons in their highly technical work. I look forward to continuing to build on this project for future ministry for Christ and His kingdom.

APPENDIX

Session One: Theology of Work

The purpose of this session will be to understand the Biblical basis of the place of work, that work has intrinsic value to God and is not only as a place for evangelism or to make money.

Opening Question: What do you think the Bible says about God's purposes for work?

Let's look at the Scriptures and see for ourselves.

Question: In Genesis 2:5, what does it say man is to do in the Garden?

Let's discuss Genesis 1:28 – "The cultural mandate and its ramifications for mankind and partnering with God.

Adam's work in the garden can be seen as a metaphor for all of work; for bringing order out of chaos.

Discuss the Hebrew word for work in Genesis 2:15, "avodah." In several places in the Old Testament, this word unites the ideas of work, labor, craftsmanship, and production with the ideas of worship, service, and ministry.

- Genesis 2:15 – "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

- Genesis 29 – Jacob works for Laban to win his wives Leah and Rachel.

- Exodus 3:12 – And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

- Numbers 8:11 – The Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron about how the Levites, the priestly class, will do the service of the Lord.

- Deuteronomy 10:12 – Uses serve.

- Joshua 24:15 – Uses serve.

Question: What do you think of the idea expressed here that work was created before the fall?

Note: God asked man to take the garden and add value to it, to make it better.

Question: What does this say for us as Christians and our attitude to work?

The Effects of the Fall on Work

- Genesis 3: Read this passage and make observations about the entrance of sin into the world and its ramifications on work.

Question: Why would Adam and Eve begin to clothe themselves?

What was lost?

How does this loss of transparency between God and man affect our work lives?

How does the curse of the thorns and thistles affect our work today?

Eric Liddell – The Scottish Missionary and Olympic Gold Medalist in the 1924 Olympics told his sister, “Mary, when I run I feel God’s pleasure.”

How can we as Christians feel God’s pleasure when we work?

Look at Genesis 9:7 and see how God reconfirms His cultural mandate for mankind after the Fall.

(Close in prayer.)

Session Two: Calling

The purpose of this session is to help the Christian appreciate God's calling on his life in terms of his work and the implications of that for stewardship and creating value.

Opening Question: When you hear the word "calling", what do you think? Does this apply to you and your work? Is this something only ministers understand?

Look at the following Scripture passages and discuss observations about calling:

- Exodus 35:30-35; 36: 1,2
- Psalm 65:9-13
- Psalm 104:22-24
- Genesis 10:8-9

William Tyndale declared "to wash dishes and to preach is all one, as touching the deeds, to please God" (Marshall p. 209).

Look at Ephesians 6:5-9 and discuss the implications of this passage on our calling to work.

Question: What does v. 6 mean when it says "serve them not only when they are watching you"?

Question: Because we are called, this implies a caller. What are the implications for stewardship of our resources (work) because we are called?

Question: What skills, abilities, and interests has God given you?

Question: Do you take pleasure in your work?

"The Puritans lived as if they had swallowed gyroscopes; we modern Christians live as if we have swallowed Gallup polls – or as Martin Luther King wrote in letters from a Birmingham jail, in those days the church was not merely a thermometer that

recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society” (Guinness p. 73).

Question: What are your reflections on this quote from Os Guinness as it relates to your calling work and life?

(Close in Prayer)

Session Three: Character

The purpose of this session is to understand the importance of good character and integrity in developing an integrated theology of work. We will look at Daniel 6 and 2 Peter 1 as models of how character gives one authority to help others flourish and add value to work. This session also looks at how the Holy Spirit helps us to develop Christian character through the application of faith, virtue, and self control.

Opening Question: Why do you think character is important to leadership and proper integrating our faith into our work?

Look at Daniel 6. Observe and note the character traits of Daniel in the following verses:

- Daniel 6:1-10
 - Excellent attitude
 - Faithful in His work
 - Personal purity
 - Consistent walk with God

Discuss implications of these traits in the workplace.

What do we do as Christians, when we find ourselves failing to meet the standard set by Daniel? Maybe we do have a bad attitude; maybe we have slipped in personal purity and are not consistent in our walk with God?

1 John 1:8, 9

How do these verses help us to get back on track with our walk with Christ?

Look at 2 Peter 1:3-9

What are the promises and gifts to us in verses 3 and 4?

Note the order of Progression – Peter writes out the promises of v.3, 4 then what our response should be from verses 5-9?

How do the divine and the human work together in these verses to create Christian character?

Can we create this on our own will?

Note that God does His work first (vv. 3, 4) which enables us to do our work (vv. 5-9).

(Close in prayer)

Session Four: Leadership

The purpose of this session is to discuss the role and impact of leadership in the integration of a theology of work. We will discuss servant leadership and look at biblical references for a biblically based leadership. We will look at the redemptive turn of servant leadership.

Look at the following biblical passages and discuss the implications for leadership:

- Deuteronomy 17:14-20
- Proverbs 12:8, 14, 24
- 2 Corinthians 13:3-10
- Proverbs 11:6
- Nehemiah 8:10, 11

Opening Question: What are the implications of these passages to Christian leadership?

Question: Why do people follow leaders?

Read John 13:1-17

Question: What are the implications and applications of this passage for leadership in your organization?

How does servant leadership differ from other forms of leadership?

Where is the focus of the servant leaders' power and authority?

(close in prayer)

Session Five: Prayer and Planning

The purpose of this session is to understand the proper role and mix of planning and prayer involved in integrating your theology into your work.

Opening Question: How do you experience and practice prayer in your work life?

Look at the following Scripture passages:

- Nehemiah 1 and 2
 - Discuss what it is that drives Nehemiah to prayer.
 - What is his concern?

- What kind of prayer does he pray in chapter in chapter 2:4?
- How long a period of time has passed between chapter one and chapter two?
- When the king asks him in chapter 2 how he can help him, what is Nehemiah's reply?
- It seems evident from Nehemiah's answer that he has spent the last four months praying and planning for this opportunity.

It is important to understand that the Bible does not approach prayer with a passive perspective. Prayer and planning work very closely together.

Proverbs 21:5 commends good planning and preparation. "Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty." (NLT)

"The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord." (NLT)

John Wooden, the legendary basketball coach of the UCLA Bruins would say, "To fail to prepare is to prepare to fail" (Sports Illustrated, 2010).

Look at Nehemiah 4 and note the combination of prayer and preparation.

How did Nehemiah combine and integrate prayer and planning in the work?

How did Nehemiah encourage the laborers in a time of threats and discouragement?

How can you use the example of Nehemiah of combining prayer, planning, and preparation in the work that you perform?

(Close in prayer)

Session Six: Ethics

The purpose of this session is to discuss the nature of ethics and how we can use it to integrate our theology into our work.

Opening Question: When you hear the word “ethics”, what comes to mind?

“One does not have to be a Christian for very long before he sees, as one commentator notes, that theology and ethics cannot be separated without fatal damage to both” (Tabletalk, June, 2009).

What do you think of the above quote?

Harvard Business School professor Lynn S. Paine has written in her book, *Value Shift* that “people sometimes forget that business ethics at its core is about excellence and high attainment rather than misdeeds and malfeasance.” (Value Shift, 2002, 1)

How does her perspective differ from a view that says ethics is just about keeping us out of trouble?

Read the following passages and discuss the relationship of ethics and theology:

- Proverbs 2
- Proverbs 22:1
- Proverbs 23:7
- Philemon

How did Paul demonstrate high ethics in sending Onesimus back to Philemon?

“Ethics is a by product of faith and not a central tenet. We must never make faith in Jesus Christ about doing the right thing. Faith in Christ is about grace” (Made to Matter, 2008, 105).

What are your thoughts on this quote above? How is ethics a by-product or fruit of your faith?

Harvard Business School professor Paine writes,

I think more managers will recognize that risk management is only part of the story and that benefits of positive values goes well beyond problem avoidance. I have seen this progression in some companies that initially turn to values as a damage control measure when confronted with a scandal in their organization. Then, over time, they come to take a broader view as they see the positive effects of work life, product quality, relationships with their constituencies, their standing in the community, all which leads to better access to talent, enhanced employee commitment, better information, sharing, greater creativity, and enhanced reputation (Value Shift, 2002, 2).

Do you see your reputation as “capital asset for future growth?”

Discuss the positive effects good ethics has on your reputation and on your business.

(Close in Prayer)

Session Seven: Devotional Life

The purpose of this session is to demonstrate the importance of a personal devotional life in order to have your faith shape and inform your work.

Opening Question: Let us share our current devotional practices.

Look at Deuteronomy 17:14-20

Deuteronomy is a “second reading”, a reminder to the Israelites of very important values that they need to implement as they are about to cross over the Jordan River into Israel.

What are the important reminders for leaders from this passage?

Why is it important and valuable to have a daily devotional time as exhibited in vv.19-20?

Read and discuss the implications of the following verses on a devotional life and how it shapes our faith in the workplace:

- Romans 12:2
- Hebrews 4:12, 13
- Titus 2:12

“Paul informs us that right thinking is necessary to right living. Those who believe the wrong things will not be the kind of people whom Christ is proud to call His brothers. (Hebrews 2:11)

Discuss the cause and effect link between proper thinking and proper doing.

Discuss a time when you can recall when a Scripture passage had a direct impact on your behavior.

Discuss ways of improving and enhancing your devotional life to make it more consistent and richer.

(Close in prayer)

Session Eight: Redemption Model for Faith and Daily Life

The purpose of this session is to teach the Christian executive how to fully integrate biblical thinking into daily work issues.

If we are going to impact our work for Christ and fully integrate our theology into our work, then we must think in a Christian manner. To think in a Christian manner, we have to apply pertinent biblical passages to issues we face in the workplace.

This model developed by Dr. Will Messenger and Paul Stevens is helpful to use in order to think biblically about situations we face at work.

Distribute the *Redemption Model for Faith and Daily Life*.

- 1) Pick a topic or issue on which to use this model.
- 2) Clarify the question.
- 3) What is good in the situation? What is the biblical support for this?

How has the fall affected this issue? What is bad or has gone wrong? What is the biblical support for this?

How do you think God wants to redeem the situation?

What is the biblical support for this?

Finally, what are possible options for decisions?

Make a decision.

What resources does the Christian faith offer us to help and implement this decision?

Create an action plan and accountability process.

Have a copy of redemption model attached.

This is an area where it is helpful to have someone familiar with the Bible, such as a minister, to help you work through the biblical portion of it. This is a great model for both ministers and laymen to work through an issue to think and apply biblical principles to a particular concern or question.

This model will help you to think in a Christian manner and to ask and evaluate the right questions when facing a situation.

(Close in prayer)

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